considering establishing a Cotton Technology Mission; and

(b) if so, the objectives thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) There is no provision for establishing a Cotton Technology Mission, at present.

Development work undertaken in the Paradip Port during Eighth Plant

*186. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Questions 1766 given in the Rajya Sabha on 31st July, 1996 and state the details of the work undertaken during Eighth Five year plan so far and the funds spent thereon for the development of paradip port?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): Against a revised 8th plan outlay of Rs. 350.00 crores in respect of Paradip Port, an expenditure of about Rs. 279 crores is anticipated by the end of March, 1997 on the work undertaken during the 8th plan.

Major Schemes undertaken at paradip port during the 8th plan are:—

1. Construction of multipurpose cargo berth. (commissioned).

2. Extension of Western Quary (Commissioned).

3. Creation of Mechanised Coal Handling Facility including construction of two coal berths. (under progress).

Approval of irrigation projects for Orissa

*187. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Orissa had submitted some irrigation project proposals for approval of the Central Government in recent past;

(b) if so, the details of those proposals;

(c) whether the Central Government have recently cleared some irrigation projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b) Details of new Major & Medium Irrigation Projects received from Orissa Government for techno-economic appraisal during last one year.

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Latest Estimated Cost (Rs. Crores)	Ultimate Irrigation Potential (Thousand hectares)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	MAJOR		
1.	Rengali Irrigation Sub Project Left Bank Canal-II	705.15	93.501
2.	Rengali Irrigation Sub Project Right Bank Main Canal (0 to 112 KM)	847.34	192.877
3.	Lower Indra Irrigation	191.56	38.87
4.	Lower Suktel	211.44	29.84
	MEDIUM		
1.	Dhauragoth	14.90	3.01

(c) and (d) Details of Major & Medium irrigation Projects given investment clearance by the Planning Commission

during the last one year. These projects were received earlier from Govt. of Orissa for clearance.

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Estimated Cost (Rs. Crores)	Ultimate Irrigation Potential (thousand hectares)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	MAJOR		
1.	Subernarekha Irrigation Project.	790.32	187.46
	MEDIUM		
2.	Bagh Barrage	44.71	12.36
3.	Baghalati	45.44	6.05

Safety of Indians in Afghanistan

*188. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indians settled in Afghanistan are being forced to leave that country and are being looted and their houses ransacked;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some Indians have already left that country and have taken shelter here as refugees and many more are on verge of leaving Afghanistan fearing looting and ransacking;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action being taken by Government to ensure safety of Indians in Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) We have seen a press report stating that people of Indian origin have been subjected to harassment in the recent past and that some have left, but have not received any corroborative report on the subject from other sources. We remain vigilant and are prepared to extend all required assistance to Indians in Afghanistan.

Proposal for Upgradation of National Highways

*189. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO:
SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposals for 22 roads totalling 6412 kms. were sent to Government for urgradation of National Highways;

(b) if so, whether Government have not so far sanctioned the remaining proposals for upgradtion of States Highways to Natioanal Highways;

(c) if so, the number of State Highways to be converted into NH during 1996-97;

(d) whether Government have decided to allow some of the State Highways of Andhra Pradesh for conversion to National Highways to private sector;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) whether the proposals of the State Government have been accepted, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. B. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Presumably the Hon'ble Members have in mind the State of Andhra Pradesh for upgradation of state roads into National Highways. Nine proposals aggregating to length of about 4000 kms. for upgrading roads to National Highways were received for the State of Andhra Pradesh during 8th Plan.

(b) A length of 362 Kms. (Kurnool-Chittoor Road) in the State of Andhra Pradesh has been added to National Highway network during 8th Plan.

(c) Due to resrouce constraints, there is no proposal to convert any State Highway into National Highway during 1996-97.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.